

30/8/76: 10.35 p.m.

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23. If God's will for the unity in love and truth of the whole Christian community is to be fulfilled, this general pattern of the complementary primatial and conciliar aspects of episcopate serving the koinonia of the churches needs to be realised at the universal level. The only (primatial) see which makes any ~~such~~ <sup>to such universal primacy</sup> claim and which has exercised and still exercises such episcopate is the see of Rome, the city where Peter and Paul died. Consequently that see appears as the most fitting to hold such a universal primacy in any future union.

24. What we have written above amounts to a consensus on the basic principles of primacy in the Church. This consensus is of fundamental importance. It is when we move from these basic principles to the particular claims of papal primacy and its exercise that problems and difficulties arise:

(a) Claims on behalf of the Roman see as commonly presented in the past have put a greater weight on the Petrine texts in the New Testament than <sup>generally thought to be</sup> they are able to bear. Roman Catholics do not now feel themselves committed to such an exegetical basis.

(b) The first Vatican Council of 1870 uses the language of "divine right" of the successors of Peter. This language has no clear interpretation in modern Roman Catholic theology. If it is understood as affirming that the universal primate, bishop of the see of Peter and Paul, is part of God's design for the universal koinonia (para. 23), then it should <sup>need</sup> not be a matter of disagreement. But if it were further implied that a church must be in communion with the bishop of Rome in order to be in any full sense a church, then a difficulty remains for some Anglicans.

(c) Anglicans find grave difficulty in the affirmation that the Pope can speak infallibly. It must, however, be borne

in mind that papal infallibility is hedged round by very rigorous conditions laid down at the First Vatican Council.

These conditions preclude the idea that the Pope is an inspired orator communicating fresh revelation, or that he

can speak independently of his fellow bishops and the Church.

For the Roman Catholic church the Pope's ~~infallible~~ definitions <sup>dogmatic when they fulfil the conditions</sup>

~~is~~ <sup>the</sup> nothing more, though ~~nothing~~ <sup>interpret of the mind of</sup> less, than the Church's

~~the church~~ own determinate judgement on an issue concerning the divine

revelation. Papal infallibility may be seen characteristically

in the ratification of the dogmatic decisions of councils.

Even so special difficulties are created by the <sup>recent</sup> Marian dogmas,

because Anglicans are unconvinced of either the necessity or

the appropriateness <sup>or even the possibility</sup> of defining the ~~Immaculate Conception or~~

~~the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin~~ as essential to the faith

of believers.

(d) The claim to universal <sup>immediate</sup> jurisdiction for the Pope,

~~the~~ the limits of which have never been clearly specified, is a

source of anxiety to Anglicans who fear that the way is thus

left open for an ~~illegitimate~~ <sup>or</sup> an uncontrolled extension of it.

There is, nevertheless, no doubt that the First Vatican Council

intended that the papal primacy should be exercised only to

maintain and never to ~~erode~~ <sup>erode</sup> the normal structures of the

<sup>Since the Sec. Vat. Council</sup> local churches. Theologians today are seeking to replace the

juridical outlook of the nineteenth century by a more pastoral

understanding of authority in the Church.

25. In view of the history of Anglican/Roman Catholic

division the prospect of common recognition of Roman

primacy would challenge the Roman see so to develop and

refashion the manner of its episcopate as to win the love and

confidence of the wider communion to be entrusted to its care.\*

At the same time the achievement of such a wider koinonia

would involve humility and readiness for change and adjustment

on both sides.

25. In spite of the difficulties just mentioned, we believe that this Statement on Authority in the Church represents a significant convergence with far reaching consequences. For a considerable period, theologians in our two traditions, without compromising their respective allegiances, have worked at common problems with shared methods. In the process they have come to see old problems in new horizons, and have experienced a doctrinal convergence which has often taken them by surprise. In our Agreed Statements we have endeavoured to get behind the opposed and entrenched positions of past controversies. We have tried to re-assess what are the real issues to be resolved. We have often deliberately avoided the vocabulary of past polemics, not with any intention of evading the real difficulties that provoked them, but because the emotive associations of such language have often obscured the truth. For the future discussions of our churches this theological convergence offers hope that remaining difficulties (including those mentioned above in para. 24) can be resolved.

26. The Malta Report of 1968 envisaged the coming together of the Roman Catholic church and the Anglican church in terms of "unity by stages". We have successively reached agreements on the doctrines of the Eucharist, Ministry, and (subject to the qualifications of para. 24) Authority. We are aware that doctrinal agreements reached by Commissions cannot by themselves achieve the goal of Christian unity. Accordingly, we submit our Statements to our respective authorities to consider whether or not they are judged to express on these central subjects a unity at the level of faith, which not only justifies but requires action to bring about a closer sharing in mission and worship between our two Communion.

VIII

16.

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26. The Malta Report of 1968 envisaged the coming together of the Roman Catholic church and <sup>the churches of</sup> the Anglican <sup>communion</sup> church in terms of "unity by stages". We have reached agreements on the doctrines of the Eucharist, Ministry, and, apart from the qualifications of para. 24, Authority. ~~We are aware that~~ <sup>however</sup> doctrinal agreements, ~~reached~~ by theological commissions cannot / by themselves achieve the goal of Christian unity. Accordingly, we submit our Statements to our respective authorities to consider whether or not they are judged to express on these central subjects a unity at the level of faith which not only justifies but requires action to bring about a closer sharing between our two Communion in life, worship and mission.